

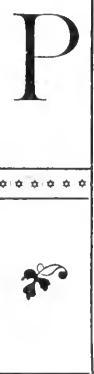
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PICTURES FROM... NORTHWEST HISTORY

By GLENN N. RANCK,
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INTRODUCTION.

It is highly desirable that the people of any State or Nation should be familiar with its history. We take a just pride in the settlement and early history of the United States. The landing of the Pilgrim Fathers, the coming of the Puritans and Quakers, and the early Colonial wars are known to all.

The "beginnings" of any State are always of absorbing interest. This is especially true of Oregon and Washington. Through our trackless forests roamed the dusky redman, the swarthy French-Canadian, the reckless fur-trapper, the venturesome *courier-de-bois* and other wandering "soldiers of fortune." Adown our crystal streams floated the light canoe of the French "voyageur," making the forests resound with his boisterous mirth and musical chansons. Amid these scenes of gaiety and strife moved the sombre frock of the devout missionary—Roman Catholic and Protestant. Here Fathers Blanchet and Brouillet, Dr. Spalding and Marcus Whitman vied with each other in the spreading of the Gospel.

And then came the sturdy pioneer, with his noble wife and his children. His worldly possessions were few, but with his indomitable resolve and ardent patriotism, he founded these grand sister-States and saved this region for the Union.

The history of the Pacific Northwest begins with the discovery of the Columbia River by an American sailor, Robert Gray, on May 11, 1792. This was followed by other explorations on sea and land, including the famous expedition by Lewis and Clark in 1805. Then came the fur-trappers and the ill-fated attempt of John Jacob Astor to establish a trading post at Astoria. On the other side, the British spirit of acquisition was typified in that powerful organization, the Hudson's Bay Company, which soon made its appearance upon the scene. The early missionaries came in the 30's and the first home builders in the 40's. In 1818 the United States and England signed the Treaty of Joint Occupation. This treaty was renewed every ten years until 1846, when it was abrogated by a new treaty by which the Oregon Territory became an undisputed part of the United States.

While waiting for the settlement of the boundary dispute between the United States and England, the settlers of the Oregon Territory organized a provisional government, with George Abernethy as Governor. This lasted

from 1845 to 1849, when the Territory was duly organized by act of Congress. The new Governor, General Joseph Lane, took the oath of office on the last day of President Polk's administration. Washington Territory was organized in 1853, Isaac I. Stevens being the first Governor. Oregon was admitted to statehood in 1859, and Washington in 1889.

Until 1853, the Oregon Territory included all of Oregon and Washington and a part of Idaho.

The first Indian war in the Northwest began with the Whitman massacre in 1847. Six years afterwards a short campaign was carried on against the Indians of the Rogue River Valley. In the winter of 1855-56 occurred the great Indian uprising which lighted the Western hills with beacon fires of burning log cabins from the lava beds of Klamath to the blue shores of Puget Sound. This was the result of a powerful coalition among the savage tribes, known as the "Conspiracy of Kamiakin."

The story of this great onslaught is replete with bloody massacres and hard-fought battles. This terrible struggle was a severe trial of the courage and fortitude of the early settlers. It has left for us many thrilling traditions—a dramatic story for every storm-swept crag, a tender legend for every sun-lit vale. Shall we hear them?

This series of disconnected sketches is written with the hope of awakening an interest in the hearts of all, especially of the school children, in our long-neglected Northwest history. A feeble attempt has been made to invest the scenes with the same life and spirit with which they were enacted. It is hoped that these pages will not be found dull and colorless to the reader. Indeed, to the sympathetic student any account of the trials, hardships and the heroic deeds of our gallant pioneer men and women, should never be found lacking in life or spirit.

Too much credit cannot be given our patriotic pioneers. Leaving home and friends behind them, they traveled for months across the desert plains, erected homes, schools and churches, endured the hardships of Indian warfare, founded three noble commonwealths, and fairly won this magnificent domain for the Union.

To the writer the "short and simple annals" of the early settlers—their strivings, their sufferings, their heroism, "their homely joys and destiny obscure" are of entrancing, absorbing interest. He wishes to lay his faint but fervent tribute of praise at their feet.

To the sturdy pioneer and his noble wife this volume is humbly and reverently dedicated.

GLENN N. RANCK.

THE COMING OF THE BUILDERS.

"I hear the tread of pioneers of nations yet to be,
The first low wash of waves where soon shall roll a human sea."

"The immigration of '43" was the largest of the early movements to the Northwest and may be taken as typical of the others.

During their famous winter journey of the year previous, Marcus Whitman and A. L. Lovejoy in addresses and letters to their friends and to the newspapers pictured the glories of the Pacific Coast and its importance to the Union. On every auspicious occasion they faithfully preached the Gospel of the Northwest.

Early in the spring, while the melting snow still lingered on many a wind-swept hill, the people began their pilgrimage toward the appointed rendezvous in a grove near Independence, Missouri. They gathered as if by magic, soon numbering one thousand dauntless spirits. They came from all parts of the Mississippi Valley, bringing their families, horses, wagons, cattle and household goods. They had taken their last look at the old home, had viewed for the last time the scenes of their youthful joys, and had spoken their last good-bye to their dearest friends, for they were about to depart on a long journey to a far country, never to return.

Notices were circulated through the various camps calling a meeting on May 14, for the purpose of drawing up a compact and forming an organization. It was truly a motley assemblage which thus came together. Peter H. Burnett, afterwards Governor of California, was first called upon for a speech, which he delivered from a throne of moss-carpeted logs. Among the audience was a gallant youth, named John W. Nesmith, who was destined to win glory for himself and Oregon in the senate of the United States. Senator Nesmith has left the following account of Burnett's address:

"He appealed to our patriotism by picturing forth the glorious empire we should establish on the shores of the Pacific; how with our trusty rifles we would drive out the British usurpers who claimed the soil, and defend the country from the advances and pretensions of the British, and how posterity would honor us for placing the finest portion of our country under the dominion of the Stars and Stripes. He concluded by a slight allusion to the

hardships and trials incident to the trip, and dangers to be encountered from hostile Indians. He furthermore intimated a desire to look upon the tribe of 'noble redmen' that the valiant and well-armed crowd around him could not vanquish in a single encounter."

After other patriotic addresses, an organization was formed by the election of Mr. Burnett as captain, and J. W. Nesmith as orderly sergeant.

On May 20, 1843, this semi-military caravan took up the line of march. Captain Gantt, an old trapper and mountaineer, acted as guide to the Green River, where Dr. Whitman overtook them and guided them to Fort Hall. From that point they were led by an old Cayuse Indian, named "Sticcus."

Dr. Whitman strongly insisted that the settlers should take their wagons all the way to the Columbia. They followed his wise counsel and brought the first "prairie schooners" to the "continuous woods, where rolls the Oregon."

They marched as did Crusaders to the Holy Land. Scouts rode in advance to prevent surprise from bands of prowling savages; a specified number of men were continually under arms, ready at all times to repel any attack, while faithful sentinels kept the lonely vigils of the night, peering with tireless eyes into the mysterious darkness for any flitting forms or phantoms which might disturb the weird bivouac of the wanderers.

For full six months the homeseekers journeyed on and on, over barren deserts strewn with the ghastly skeletons of men and cattle, across high mountains and swollen torrents, till they came in sight of the beautiful valleys of the promised land. Having once put their hands to the plough-share, amid all their trials and temptations they never failed; they never for a moment thought of turning back.

Nor was the journey without its brighter sides. Many an amusing incident occurred which kept the traveling community in mirth for days; many enduring friendships were formed which ceased only with life itself.

Gathering at eventide around the camp fire's fitful beams, they sang the songs that Israel sang beside the deep Red Sea; they sang the songs of Home and Freedom beneath the greenwood tree, and of the land they would redeem for sweet liberty. In the serene and quiet night from some lone mountain-side rang the glad, clear song of the pioneer, rousing the mountain lion from his downy couch, while trembled with fright the timid deer.

THE HYMN OF THE PIONEER

From broad Mississippi's swelling main
We come over mountain and desert plain,
We come as did Israel's chosen host
To seek Freedom's home on Pacific's fair coast;
To win for the Union, by strength of the Lord,
The fair land of Promise from Royalty's horde.
Swell the bold chorus, exultingly sing,
With Liberty's anthem the dim woods will ring.

Our homes in the West shall proclaim Liberty,
There from his bondage the slave shall be free;
We sing the glad songs of the brave and the blest,
For the spirit of freedom abides in the West.
Swell the sweet anthem, exultant and free,
Sound the loud timbrel from sea unto sea,
Jehovah will triumph, his people be free,
All will be free—all will be free!

At length, their sojourn in the wilderness being o'er,
from some lofty mountain height they viewed the promised land. When they beheld the fertile valley of the majestic Columbia, and the beautiful blue waters of Puget Sound covered with so many lovely isles, it all seemed to them like a fairy picture of that quest of the ages:

"The island-valley of Avalon,
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor even wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard-lawns,
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea."

And here, soothed by the moaning of Old Ocean, pleased by the melody of murmuring streams, and charmed by the cheery welcome of the birds, they ceased from their quest and founded the States of Washington and Oregon.

A HISTORICAL DEBATING SOCIETY.

History as it is "wrote" pays very little attention to the Debating Club. In fact, most histories do not even mention the term. Still, the Debating Society or Lyceum is one of the "institutions" of America. It is a part of the great American system. From the landing of the Pilgrims, during the Colonial period, in the upbuilding of the mighty West, and on to the present time, it has always played an important part in our history. This institution had a share in the "Americanizing" of the great Northwest, and helped to save it as a part of our glorious Union.

Among the first social organizations of this region was the Lyceum and Debating Society formed by the early settlers at Willamette Falls, now Oregon City. From 1840 to 1843 the most important question in the minds of the pioneers was the question of government. Under the Treaty of Joint Occupancy, neither the United States nor Great Britain could take any steps toward controlling the political affairs of the Oregon Territory, which then included Washington. Thus left alone, the pioneers found themselves torn by conflicting emotions and desires. One party, formed by the British and French-Canadians connected with the Hudson's Bay Company, and aided by some unpatriotic Americans, favored an independent government—a Pacific republic. On the other side, a temporary government, based upon the principles of the American constitution and providing for ultimate absorption by the great Republic, was near to the hearts of the patriotic Americans as a "consummation devoutly to be wished." This great question was freely discussed at various meetings of the Lyceum. At a meeting early in 1843 the following resolution was offered as a subject for debate: "Resolved, that it is expedient for the settlers upon the Pacific coast to establish an independent government." George Abernethy, afterward first provisional Governor of Oregon, opposed the resolution, but after a warm discussion it was carried by a large majority. To check this drifting away from the Union, Mr. Abernethy introduced as the subject at the next debate: "Resolved, that if the United States extends its jurisdiction over this country within the next four years, it will not be expedient to form an independent government."

By the time for the next meeting great interest had been aroused, and the people attended in large numbers, some bringing their wives and children. The men who

thus came together in that rude, dimly-lighted log cabin on that eventful evening, in personality, appearance and traditions, presented many strong contrasts.

The flickering light from the blazing fireplace and the candles' fitful beams casting weird, grotesque shadows about the room, served to bring the characters into bolder relief, and made the contrasts more intense.

There was one of the early missionaries, a follower of John Wesley, sitting by a group of French-Canadians; a French Huguenot, whose forefathers had fled across the sea after that ill-fated eve of St. Bartholomew, sat near a venturesome courier-de-bois who had crossed the raging torrents and roamed the trackless wilds from the isles of the St. Lawrence to the River of the West. A descendant of a gallant cavalier who had fought that Prince Charlie might "come to his own again" jostled against a Puritan whose forefathers fought on the side of Oliver Cromwell at Naseby and Marston Moor. On the virgin soil of Oregon the roundhead was again to win a victory over the cavalier; freedom was again to triumph over royalty. The grandson of a British redcoat who had surrendered with Cornwallis was about to yield a bloodless sword to an American whose grandfather had suffered with Washington at Valley Forge only to triumph with him at Yorktown.*

Before this motley group George Abernethy arose to defend his patriotic resolution. We have no record of his speech, only that it was "earnest." That is all. He doubtless reminded the Americans of the immortal Declaration of Independence, of the suffering and trials of their Revolutionary forefathers, of the efforts of Washington, Madison and Franklin, to establish this glorious Union. And how Clay and Webster, Jackson and Benton, the great friend of the West, had protected and preserved it. "Was it in vain that the embattled yeomanry of Lexington and Concord had fought so bravely "by the rude bridge that spanned the flood?" Was it in vain that Warren had given up his life on the field of Bunker Hill? Could they forget the blood-stained footprints of Valley Forge, the stirring midnight ride of Paul Revere, or the recent perilous journey of their gallant comrade, Marcus Whitman? Never while life lasted could they forget the traditions and legends of their heroic ancestry! Never until liberty became merely a memory and patriotism only a name, would they falter in their love or devotion to the great Republic!

While the patriot was speaking no sounds were heard save the sound of the speaker's voice. But ere his voice had died away a mighty shout arose from the hardy pio-

neers. All patriotic Americans present "joined in," the mild tones of the women and children blended with the strong, lusty voices of the men in one grand triumphal note. It rolled through the room, on out into the little clearing and penetrated the forests beyond. "The dim aisles of the woods rang with the anthems of the free."

What was that shout and what did it mean? It was the paeon of liberty. It was the victorious cry of triumphant freedom. It meant that the resolution was carried by a large majority and that Old Glory would yet wave over the homes of the West. The fire on the hearth had burned low, smoldered and died; but in living hearts another fire glowed brightly, for those burning words had "kindled the land into flame with their heat." It is now over half a century since this scene was enacted, but the speech of Abernethy before that historic debating society is not forgotten by the descendants of the pioneers.

*Rev. Cushing Eels was descended from Maj. Samuel Eels, one of Cromwell's officers. Hon. C. M. Bradshaw was a direct descendant of John Bradshaw, who presided at the famous trial of King Charles I. Mr. Bradshaw still preserves the reliques of the brave "regicide" who boldly voted to behead the tyrant kinglet. Rev. G. Hines, Rev. D. Leslie, the Crocketts, McBrides and the Applegates were from Revolutionary ancestry. Of course, they were not all present at this particular meeting, but they participated in many similar scenes. O. W. Le Breton, who doubtless was present, was a noble type of the patriotic Huguenots.

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE.

Owing to the noble efforts of the early missionaries, and patriotic discussions in the Pioneer Lyceum, the demand of the settlers of the Oregon Territory for a temporary government based upon American principles and providing for ultimate absorption by the United States, continued to grow rapidly in the spring of 1843. This plan met with great opposition from the British settlers and the employees of the Hudson's Bay Company. In order to quiet this opposition a meeting was called for the purpose of adopting measures for the defense of herds against the attacks of wolves and other wild animals. This meeting was held at the house of Joseph Gervais in the Willamette Valley, and is known as the "Wolf Meeting." It declared war against wolves, bears, panthers and other predatory animals, and adopted plans for their destruction. A treasurer was elected and the organization of the Wolf Association was completed.

But the meeting did not adjourn. As if moved by some unseen inspiration, it then and there passed a resolution for the appointment of a committee of twelve "to take into consideration the propriety of taking measures for the civil and military protection of the colony." A written protest from the subjects of the Queen was promptly laid on the table.

The committee of twelve called the colonists to meet at Champoeg on May 2, 1843, to vote on their plan of government.

Centuries before the freeholders of England had met in a meadow at Runnymede and there wrested their sacred rights from the reluctant hand of a cowardly king. So now did these free American citizens assemble in an open field to uphold the scepter of freedom and justice against the determined assaults of tyranny and royalty. The meeting which was held on this beautiful day in May was one of the most interesting and picturesque in all history. There were emigrant wagons, the earliest "prairie schooners" to cross the billowy plains piloted by bold captains of civilization, who had pitched their tents near by. All around was the deep primeval forest. On the branches overhead the birds twittered softly while building their summer's abode; squirrels leaped joyfully from bough to bough, and the fleet-footed deer, "poor, dangled fools, being native burghers of this desert city," lifting their heads from the cool brook which babbled by.

fled in terror from their favorite haunt. Here, under the greenwood tree, with the blue sky above them and the voice of nature in their hearts, the pioneers met to form an American government. In these sylvan shades the scion of Revolutionary sires again opposed the haughty Briton; in this open field cavalier and Puritan met once more in bloodless conflict; in freedom's glorious sunshine, a freed negro struck his first vigorous blow at those who had so cruelly torn his forefathers from the sunny clime of Africa.* A few dusky redmen of the forest, looking warlike in their paint and feathers, were interested spectators of this strange scene of which they unconsciously formed a part.

The meeting was called to order with Dr. I. I. Babcock presiding. G. W. Le Breton, acting as secretary, read aloud the compact of government. It was then voted on, those in favor shouting "aye," and those opposed "no." The vote was almost even, but the motion seemed lost. Le Breton called for a division. Everybody became excited. Noise and confusion reigned. At this crisis Joe Meek, the pioneer explorer and scout of the Northwest, sprang forward. As he stood before that strange group, with his strong, erect figure drawn to its full height, his head thrown back, his black eyes flashing and the Indians looking on with ever-increasing amazement, the whole scene formed a most striking picture, with the dark forest for a background. Waving his hand, Joe Meek shouted in his usual spirited manner: "All those who favor the government, follow me!" Accordingly those favoring the organization followed Meek to the right, while those opposed filed to the left. The count showed that the compact was carried by the close vote of fifty-two against fifty. Freedom had triumphed.

The provisional government thus organized adopted an organic law "until such time as the United States of America extend their jurisdiction over us," also providing that "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in said territory, other than for punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted." This provision adopted eighteen years before the Rebellion, kept Oregon and Washington firm in their devotion to the cause of Union and Freedom in the time of direst need. Truly, the result of this open-air meeting held in the forest wilds of Oregon half a century ago can hardly be overestimated. What thoughts must have filled the brain of the typical pioneer as he wended his solitary way homeward in the deepening dusk of that May evening! With his trusty rifle on his shoulder and his faithful dog at his side, he followed the many windings of the narrow

footpath through the darkening forest. Entering the dark recesses of the forest dell, he leaned upon the trunk of a large fir tree to rest his weary limbs. As he closed his tired eyelids the elfin voices of the forest rang in his ears. He seemed to hear the fairy footfalls of the guardian of the wood as she waved her wand about him, and visions of the future came and went before his enraptured sight. He saw the Northwest peopled by a happy population, the beautiful valleys covered with villages, farms and factories. Over it all floated the flag of the glorious re-united Republic, reminding him strongly of the prophetic picture observed by Benjamin Franklin at the Constitutional convention. The setting sun had long since disappeared below the horizon, but above liberty's horizon, morning was to break anew on this far Western coast and before the sun of the Union reached its zenith, the day star of our hope was destined to glow with still brighter lustre, like "another sun risen on mid-noon."

*A mulatto named Winslow Anderson was among the early settlers of the Willamette Valley. In 1843 "prairie schooners" were for the first time brought all the way from the Missouri River to the "continuous woods where rolls the Oregon."

DEDICATING THE PACIFIC COAST TO FREEDOM.

Under all circumstances, in peace and in war, the American navy has gallantly upheld the dignity and power of the United States. Among the most daring of this country's naval heroes was Captain Charles Wilkes. This distinguished officer explored the coast of Oregon and Washington in 1841, and encouraged the early settlers in their patriotic efforts to win this region for the great Republic. He disapproved of the attempt to organize a Pacific republic, advising the Americans to wait until the government of the United States should throw its mantle over them. The American sentiment was greatly strengthened by his words of hope and cheer.

In 1841 Captain Wilkes and his merry crew signalized the return of our Nation's birthday by holding the first Fourth of July celebration on the shores of Puget Sound. The place selected for this purpose was Mission Prairie, near Fort Nesqually, a trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company.

As the Fourth came on Sunday, the celebration was held on the fifth of July. On that morning all was bustle and activity on board the ship *Vincennes*. At nine o'clock all the crew was mustered on board in their clean, white frocks and trousers, and all, including the marines, were soon landed. With music playing and flags flying, they marched to the scene of festivity about a mile distant. They also carried ashore two brass howitzers with which to fire the usual salute. An ox, bought for the occasion, was soon roasted to a turn, the bugle was blown for dinner and all repaired to partake of the barbecue. Captain Wilkes says: "By this time the Indians had gathered from all quarters and were silently looking on at the novel sight, and wistfully regarding the feast which they saw going on before them."

The neat, loose-fitting uniform of the sailors, the bright-colored garments of the savages, the rich, green shades of the forest, the beautiful blue waters of Puget Sound and the patriotic memories belonging to the occasion, all combined to make this an interesting scene in Northwest history.

After dinner the usual salutes were fired and patriotic sentiments were given voice. At sunset they returned to the ship in good humor. While passing Fort Nesqually they gave three hearty cheers for the American flag and

waited, sailor-like, for the reply. The British response was given by only a few voices, a circumstance which led to many jokes among the seamen. To the English the cheer of the sailors was "a cry of defiance and not of fear." No wonder their reply was a feeble one!

In May, 1843, when the people of the region decided by a vote of fifty-two against fifty to establish a provisional government based upon American principles, they appointed a committee to draw up the organic act. This committee selected July 5 as the day on which the people were to meet to pass upon their charter. However, the opposition was still strong, and the Americans decided to hold a celebration on the Fourth of July to strengthen the patriotic cause. Rev. Gustavus Hines was chosen orator. His speech did not consist of partisan denunciation; it was one of the dear, old-fashioned kind. It had its source in the higher springs of patriotism. His theme was the Union; his song was of Liberty. His notes rang clear and true upon the pure forest air. There may be those who would prefer to hear their countrymen shamed rather than praised on the natal birthday; but not so the hearty frontiersman. The plain and simple words of the speaker went straight to the hearts of the pioneers. Mr. Hines and many of his listeners were descended from Revolutionary ancestry, and memories of the sacred past were vividly recalled. As the speaker concluded, his words took on the warmth and glow of impassioned eloquence. "All the weary way from Lexington to Yorktown our fathers proved true to the cause of American independence. Who that has ever heard the story of that struggle from the lips of a patriot grandfather can falter in defense of our sacred rights? Though it may be of little importance what is said here, let us on the morrow remember the examples and teachings of the Revolutionary patriots and our work will be long remembered.

"When the fathers signed their names to the immortal Declaration, they pledged themselves to defend their rights with their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor. So let us now carry on their noble work, let us dedicate ourselves and our homes to the cause of Liberty and Union, and pledge ourselves to support our principles with our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor."

After the oration, the national hymn "America" was sung by the entire audience. As they sang that perfect verse where the poet boldly strikes the pure notes of sublime eloquence and invokes the sympathetic voice of nature in freedom's behalf, the sturdy pioneers felt profoundly moved:

"Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
Sweet Freedom's song;
Let mortal tongues awake,
Let all that breathe partake,
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong!"

And rock and rill, mountain and forest, all gladly prolonged the joyful sound.

Thus inspired, the Americans on the morrow won another bloodless victory over the Briton, and the provisional government was soon in successful operation. Thus freedom triumphed over royalty, and this region was peaceably conquered for the Union. Truly "Peace hath her victories not less renowned than war."

Mr. Hines was descended from Stephen Hopkins, one of the "signers." The orator was elected chairman of the meeting of July 5, 1843.

RAISING THE BANNER OF FREEDOM IN THE NORTHWEST.

"Aye, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high;
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky!"

History records no grander achievement than the glorious victories won by America's naval heroes in behalf of the starry emblem of our great Republic. From the eventful morning on which Paul Jones first flung Freedom's ensign to the expectant breeze, or when the undaunted Perry bore his banner in triumph from his burning flagship, to that day when the noble Farragut, while lashed to the rigging of the Hartford, with the flag floating above him, achieved glory for himself and his gallant crew, the log-book of the American navy speaks of noble deeds. The memories aroused by the mere mention of such names as Lawrence, Decatur, Hull, Foote, DuPont and David Porter should remind us of the importance of a strong navy.

But not alone in the "purple testaments of bleeding war" are the victories of the American sailor inscribed. American commerce, American spirit and American civilization have followed the American flag on the trackless paths of stormy oceans, from port to port and from sea to sea. Into whatever harbor our gallant tars have carried the starry emblem, they have also taken that love of liberty and freedom for which it stands.

When Captain Charles Wilkes, of the United States navy, appeared off the coast of Oregon and Washington in 1841 his hearty assurance that the government would soon extend its jurisdiction over them seemed like a message of hope and cheer wafted by winds of ocean from the far Atlantic coast.

In 1846 the United States schooner *Shark*, commanded by Lieutenant Howison, was sent to explore the coast of Oregon. Entering the Columbia River, the *Shark* reached Fort Vancouver July 24, 1846. Her officers and men were hailed with delight by the patriots of the Northwest. In June of that year a treaty had been completed by the United States and England which finally designated the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude as the northwest boundary line. But as the news of this treaty had not yet reached the Pacific coast, the ill-feeling between British and Americans was becoming hourly more critical. As

there is no greater contrast than that existing between a British officer and the American frontiersman, it required the best efforts of Lieutenant Howison to prevent bloodshed.

The Shark remained at Vancouver until August 23, when she left for the mouth of the Columbia. She was wrecked while crossing the bar on the tenth of September. Like the gallant Cumberland, she sank beneath the waves with her colors still flying. Her flag was all that the sailors rescued from the sinking ship.

By this time news of the treaty of 1846 had just reached the Pacific coast, and as it was known that the protecting power of the United States would soon be extended over this region Lieutenant Howison presented this flag to the provisional Governor, George Abernethy, with the following eloquent letter: "To display this national emblem, and cheer our citizens of this distant territory by its presence was a principal object of the Shark's visit to the Columbia, and it appears to me, therefore, highly proper that it should henceforth remain with you as a memento of parental regard from the general government. With the fullest confidence that it will be received and appreciated as such by our countrymen, I do myself the honor of transmitting the flag to your address; nor can I omit to express my gratification and pride that this relic of my late command should be emphatically the first United States flag to wave over the undisputed and thoroughly American Territory of Oregon."

Governor Abernethy gracefully received the starry flag in behalf of the pioneers in his usual patriotic manner, saying: "We will fling it to the breeze on every suitable occasion, and rejoice under the emblem of our country's glory, sincerely hoping that the 'star-spangled banner' may ever wave over this portion of the United States."

On that glorious morn when liberty's emblem was first unfolded to the virgin breeze of primeval Oregon, all plans of a Pacific republic were swept aside. The ensign seemed to retain within its folds some of the invigorating, purifying power of the sea breeze in which it had so fondly floated for so many years. As free as the wild waves of ocean, as pure as its freshest winds, as terrible as Neptune's mightiest storms, it purged the Northwest of all taint of treason and became a continual inspiration for an exalted patriotism.

ESTHER SHORT AND THE REDCOATS.

As the time drew nigh when the Treaty of Joint Occupancy was to expire, Great Britain put forth great exertions to have the Columbia River recognized as the boundary line between her American possessions and the Oregon Territory. The best land in the Willamette Valley having been taken, the American home-builders began to push across the Columbia, as they had a perfect right to do, with the intention of settling upon the north side of that stream. This brought them into still closer contact with the British element, and increased the bitter feeling existing between them, until, in some instances, it took on all the intensity of border warfare.

During those days the scenes presented within the stockade of the Hudson's Bay Company's fort at Vancouver, was replete with variety and romance. There was the French-Canadian trapper with his buckskin breeches, and his picturesque cloak carelessly flung over his shoulders, engaged in animated conversation with a party of voyageurs who had just returned in their canoes from the headwaters of the Snake River; before the company's store, a large building in the center of the inclosure, a group composed of stalwart redmen of the forest, dark-skinned Kanakas from the far-off Hawaiian Isles, and plaided Highlanders from the mountains of Scotland, gave undivided attention to a venturesome *courier-de-bois* who was describing his latest travels among the frozen regions of the north. An American settler paused while passing out of the main gateway to shout a ringing defiance to the commandant, who had threatened him with violence unless he retraced his footsteps to the south side of the Columbia.

Alarmed by the growing frequency of such demonstrations, the commandant ordered that the ponderous gate should be more securely barred at nightfall, and that the drawbridge should be raised promptly at the set of sun. From the tower in the northwest corner of the palisades the guard peered with greater vigilance into the gathering darkness. It may not be out of place to add that the writer's father was often rudely awakened at the witching hour of midnight by the sentry's shrill cry: "Twelve o'clock and all is well!" The bastion was surmounted by two small cannon, and surrounded by a narrow plank walk. Upon this short beat, the guard, who

was frequently a Scotchman of the redoubtable Douglas clan, would march to and fro during the weary watches of the night.

"Above the gloomy portal arch,
The sturdy warden kept his march,
Low-humming as he paced along
Some ancient border-gathering song."

But even this stronghold of British influence was destined to be invaded by the sturdy immigrants from the United States. A young settler named Henry Williamson was one of the earliest Americans to brave the wrath of the Hudson's Bay Company by staking out a claim upon the present site of Vancouver. This venturesome home-builder had emigrated from the State of Indiana, and upon leaving home he had placed a ring upon the finger of a fair damsle who promised to remain true to her gallant knight-errant during his wanderings in the West. After choosing a dwelling place in some pleasant vale on the Pacific Coast, he was to return to take bither his plighted bride. Impelled by such high hopes as these, this bold pioneer scaled the rugged mountain peaks and crossed the burning deserts, until he paused one glorious morning upon the banks of the majestic River of the West. With a lightsome ballad on his lips, and music in his heart sweeter than the blithe carol of the birds among the leafy branches, he began the task of building a home in this vast wilderness. To a French-Canadian boating song, wafted to him from a party of voyageurs gliding down the stream, he fitted the words of his own heart—words resonant with hope and love:

THE YOUNG SETTLER'S LOVE-SONG.

Loud rings the axe of the woodsman brave,
In his forest home by Columbia's wave.
On this chosen spot he builds his cot,
With logs from the evergreen tree,
Hewn with thoughts of thee, Mary,
Hewn with thoughts of thee.

Blithe is the lay of the settler free,
Resounding o'er river and lea,
At his daily toil on the virgin soil,
'Neath the shade of the evergreen tree,
He sings of love and thee, Mary,
He sings of love and thee.

Despite the numerous obstacles thrown in his way by the British, he erected his log cabin and had a portion of his claim laid off into town lots by Surveyor P. W. Crawford, the father of W. P. and E. G. Crawford, two of Vancouver's leading business men at the present time. At

length all was ready for the coming of the bride, and our youthful pioneer journeyed all the way back to the Hoosier state only to find that the form which he longed to clasp to his breast had lain for months within the tomb. The bright hopes which had lured his eager feet across the dreary plain were not less illusive than the mirage or phantom lake toward which he had vainly hastened to quench his parching thirst. The broken-hearted lover retraced his weary footsteps back to his forest home. But it no longer possessed any charms for him. He wandered about aimlessly until he joined the Argonauts of '49, and was finally lost to our view among the gold fields of California.

The next American to invade this region was Amos M. Short, who came here with his family in 1845. This intrepid settler and his faithful wife, Esther Short, were true types of the pioneer yeomanry of the Northwest. They were coldly received by the officials of the great fur trading company, who refused to sell them either food or clothing so long as they persisted in their intention of erecting their home altar here as citizens of the great Republic. To those who came as neutrals, these "King George men" were the best of friends; to those who came as American citizens, they were the bitterest of enemies.

Undeterred by this spirit of hostility, the newcomers staked out their claim and erected their humble log cabin. While the husband was cutting the rails for a fence around their little clearing the wife overhauled the spinning wheel and was soon busily engaged spinning the wool for their home-made garments. Through the open doorway she could hear the ring of her husband's axe and the sweet warblings of the birds among the trees. The broad Columbia rolled in majesty at her feet; in the distance that sentinel mountain, Hood, matched his snow-crowned crest against the fleecy whiteness of the clouds. In tune to the grand scene about her, and in time to the whirling of her spindle, her heart burst forth into involuntary song. It was a song such as pioneer women were wont to sing as they went about their daily tasks. Into it were carelessly woven scenes and events of every-day life. In it were blended the gay measure of some sprightly ballad and the solemn notes of a religious hymn; now free and wild as the swollen current of Burnt Bridge Creek as it tore away the dam by Priedmore's old mill—now soft and low as that same stream's gentlest murmur when soothed by summer's shallow flow.

SONG OF THE PIONEER HOUSEWIFE.

We will build us a home in the forest wild,
'Mid the wild-rose blooms and the fir's kind shade,
Where sweeps our broad river so grand and so mild.
And from our cot in the leafy glade,
We see the fleet deer as he rushes by.
Look! He leaps in the stream and swims from the shore,
Pursued by the huntsmen and hounds in full cry;
The oars splash, the rifles flash, the deer's joys are o'er.

What though the Briton lays claim to this land,
And threatens to drive us from hearth and from home,
In vain they molest us with fire and brand,
From this favored place they shall ne'er make us roam.
We will stand firm 'mid all trials and dangers,
And cheerfully sing our cares to beguile:
"We are pilgrims, we are strangers,
We can tarry, we can tarry but a while."

But the Hudson's Bay Company was not content with the mere withholding of supplies from this American settler. They tried to discourage him by sending parties of their employees to pull down his fences, and commit other like depredations. On one occasion when Mr. Short had gone to the American settlement at Oregon City to purchase needed supplies, a party of the Company's employees placed Mrs. Short and her children upon a bateau which they then pushed adrift into the current of the Columbia with but a single oar on board. It was only by the utmost skill and exertion that the poor mother was enabled to paddle the cumbersome craft to the shore and save herself and children from their perilous position.

Upon his return, Mr. Short announced his firm determination to defend his hearth and home at all hazards. So when the next crowd attempted to pull down his fence, he loaded his rifle and fired upon them, killing an officer and a servant of the company. For this deed, committed in defense of his home, Mr. Short was arrested and taken before Justicee Petrain, father of C. A. Petrain, now a prominent attorney of Portland. After an examination, Mr. Short was taken to Oregon City to be tried by Judge Lancaster, of the Oregon provisional government. He was, however, finally released without trial.

During the enforced absence of the home-builder the British prepared to renew their work of destruction. A small squad of men were sent out under the lead of a French-Canadian named FiCecatte, with instructions to continue the tearing down of the pioneer's rail fence. FiCecatte was an adventurous courier-de-bois who had been in the employ of the company for many years. Under British command he had roamed the Western wilds from Montreal to Fort Vancouver. He therefore represented the aggressive spirit and prowess of Great Britain as truly

as did those redcoats who were so badly beaten by John Stark and his "Green Mountain" boys at Bennington. Moreover, he was sent out by Governor Ogden, the son of a British tory who had been driven to Halifax by the patriots of the Revolution. When Esther Short saw this little army approaching her castle she became as indignant as did the Boston schoolboys when the redcoats under General Gage interfered with their games by breaking up the ice on Boston common. Like those free-spirited lads, she felt that she had suffered from British cruelty long enough. Like them, also, she was determined to bear their tyranny no longer. So just as FiCecatte put his hands upon the topmost rail and began to wrench it from its place, by a deft swing of her arm she struck him with the palm of her hand a stinging blow across the cheek. Before he realized it, the astonished fur-trapper was lying on the green sward at his conqueror's feet. As soon as he could gather himself together the abashed French-Canadian beat a hasty retreat to the fort, where he gave the commandant, Governor Peter Ogden, a graphic account of his disastrous encounter. During the recital of his trusty courter-de-bois who had never before suffered defeat, the sides of the gallant Governor fairly shook with laughter. At its conclusion, with a merry twinkle in his eye, he sagely remarked: "I guess we had better give it up; we can never hope to win against such brave women as that." And Mr. FiCecatte himself, who still resides at Vancouver at the ripe age of eighty-five, laughs heartily when he tells the story of his humiliating defeat.

Governor Ogden was a brave, generous-hearted man, to whom a petty warfare against settlers and their wives was extremely distasteful. This incident taught him that the incoming tide of American yeomanry would maintain their rights with all the bravery of their forefathers. He was wise enough to foresee that a struggle against such a band of determined men and women could have but one result. He was candid enough to admit his defeat, and withdraw gracefully from the contest.

The salutary lesson taught by this sturdy American matron was most wholesome in its effect. She did not ride forth to battle, like Joan of Arc, encased in shining breastplate of steel. She was panoplied only in the armor of her own righteousness. Other weapon had she none, save her good right arm and the sublime justice of her cause. Her victory loses none of its grandeur because unaccompanied by the roar of artillery, the flash of sabers, or the cheers of victorious legions. Her army was the brood of children at her knee; her banners, the foliage of evergreen trees waving in the breeze overhead. Standing

with uplifted hand, amid the rich wild flowers and the swaying grass, the rough log cabin behind her, the rude rail fence before, she presents as impressive a picture as that engraved by our forefathers upon the storied bridge at Concord.

Vancouver's coat-of-arms consists of a picture of Mount Hood, with the Columbia River in the foreground. This scene may be claimed in common by other towns in this neighborhood, and commemorates no achievements of America's heroes. Would it not be more appropriate to change this for one representing our Joan of Arc in the act of defying and putting to flight the hirelings of Great Britain's wealth and prowess? This would continually remind us that the pioneer women of the Northwest displayed the same heroism in the defense of their firesides as did their grandmothers in the days of Washington and Molly Pitcher. Then in years to come some fair reader of this humble narrative, as she sits by the evening fire with her grandchildren on her knee, will relate to the listening little one a tradition not less inspiring than "Grandfather's Tale of Yorktown," the thrilling story of Esther Short and her victory over the British redcoats.

NOTE.—Years ago one of the writer's greatest joys was the annual visit to his grandparents' old log cabin, on the banks of the Columbia, near St. Helens, Oregon. In the evening grandmother would bring her spinning wheel to the fireside, where she would sing and spin. Her singing was almost invariably concluded with that well-known hymn: "I'm a pilgrim, I'm a stranger."

The hunting scene described in the song was witnessed by the writer during one of these visits.

Priedmore's old mill on Burnt Bridge Creek was built by one of the early French-Canadian trappers. Portions of the sills still remain.

It may be of interest to the admirers of Walter Scott to know that Sir James Douglas, one of the bravest bearing the dreaded Douglas name, was for a time the commandant at Fort Vancouver.

A PIONEER WITNESS TREE.

Of all the gifts of nature few are more beneficent, bountiful or beautiful than the forest tree. It not only enriches mankind, but adorns the landscape as well. It absorbs many poisonous gases and purifies the surrounding atmosphere. It cleanses the air that loiters to play among its branches, and sends it, loaded with fragrance and sweetness, on its joyous way. Its graceful foliage shelters the nesting birds, while it lends a charm to their sweetest songs.

As the loveliest of ferns and mosses thrive within our shady groves, so many of our most glorious traditions are inseparably associated with the tree of the forest. The tree is the natural friend of freedom. Tyranny, corruption and impurity need never expect a home in the forest. Their tainted and deformed imps would be bereft of all power by the purity and freshness of the breeze that rustles through the scented grove, and stifled by the wild sweetness of the woodland melodies. It was in complete harmony with nature's plan for William Penn to conclude his treaty of peace and friendship with the Indians beneath the kindly shade of a forest monarch, and for Wadsworth to entrust the Charter of Connecticut's Liberties to the constant heart of a stout old oak.

At the foot of Main street in the City of Vancouver, Washington, may be seen a large cottonwood tree, which has an honored place in the early chronicles of our commonwealth. It has boldly reared its crest just upon the bank of the broad Columbia, and its antlered branches stand out in clear relief against that silvery stream. In the records of Clarke County this aged giant is officially known by the poetic name of a "Balm of Gilead" tree, a name that seems to light up that musty account of the deeds of the "rude forefathers of the hamlet" with the soft glow of poetry and romance. During the present century this forest monarch has beheld many strange vicissitudes. From its foot the savage tribes embarked in their canoes on many a warlike expedition; the voyageurs of the Hudson's Bay Company moored their batteaus near its roots when they came to establish a trading post here in 1824; while the humble American settler landed beneath its protecting shade when he came to battle with the British for the possession of the soil.

From 1840 to 1850 that powerful organization, the Hudson's Bay Company, exerted its utmost influence to deter citizens of the United States from settling on land north of the Columbia River. The officials of this despotic company succeeded in driving away all American settlers

until the arrival of that dauntless pioneer, Amos M. Short and his brave wife, Esther Short. Ignoring all the insolent threats of the British, Mr. Short proceeded to erect his log cabin, and stake out his donation land claim, selecting the magnificent Balm of Gilead as his witness-tree and point of beginning. This tree thus stood on the border, and between two contending powers, and marked the boundary of the British company's possessions from the land of the American pioneer.

But it was far more than a mere landmark. It marked the "point of beginning" to active resistance from the Americans to the haughty aggression of the British. From the moment that Amos Short sunk his gleaming axe into that noble cottonwood and marked its trunk with the blaze of liberty, the power of the British steadily declined. That act dedicated the tree and the surrounding region to the cause of freedom. The bold yeoman had taken up his claim in conformity to the land laws of the United States, and in defending his property he was upholding the honor and dignity of his country's emblem. He maintained his rights with all the bravery of an American citizen. When the Hudson's Bay Company sent a party of men to drive him away from his home, he took down his musket and went forth to meet them. After fair warning, he fired upon them, killing an officer and a servant of the company, while the others retreated in utter dismay. After a few more attempts to dislodge him, the British desisted, leaving him to occupy his land in peace. Other settlers came pouring in, and the entire region was soon in undisputed possession of the Americans.

In the dusty, time-stained chronicles in the auditor's office the description of this pioneer's homestead is recorded in the customary legal style, as follows: "Beginning at a large Balm of Gilead tree on the north bank of the Columbia River, and running thence," etc.

From that Balm of Gilead liberty's lines have been extended in all directions, until the broad principles of American Freedom and Justice now enfold this entire commonwealth within their kindly grasp; for the Tree of Liberty is not a dwarfed shrub growing upon Tyranny's blasted heath but a noble giant. And the blaze of Freedom which the settler cut upon its trunk has broadened and deepened with age.

This historic witness-tree still stands upon the bank of the storied Columbia, the warm sap flowing freely through its lusty veins. Its rich, green leaves are as bright and fresh as the principles of eternal justice; its soft, snowy bloom not less spotless than the sacred cause of Truth and Right. May it long thrive—a living memorial of the past—a venerable title-deed of American industry, courage and glory!

HANK PEARSON'S RIDE.

THEME.

At the beginning of the Indian uprising under Chiefs Kamiakin and Kanasket, in November of 1855, Governor Stevens was near Fort Benton, Montana, attending the Blackfoot council. As the people needed their gallant leader in this great emergency, Hank Pearson volunteered to hasten onward with the dispatch.

His course led him through five hundred miles of hostile land filled with lurking savages, and over rough, snow-covered mountains. When one horse was worn out he jumped upon another and pressed on without pausing for rest. When he reached his destination his clothes were frozen stiff to his body and he was so weak withal that he had to be lifted from the horse and carried into the house. Pearson lived at Vancouver, and was widely known for his expert horsemanship, having served as a courier on many occasions.

While this dangerous ride did not result in the rider's instant death, as related in the verse, it greatly hastened his untimely end; and the story of his heroic self-sacrifice remains a poetic truth.

Among the famous rides of history none are more thrilling than this, and it is rendered doubly precious by its associations with the name of our heroic Governor, Isaac I. Stevens.

A COURIER OF THE WEST.

"Heaven's cherubin, horsed upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye."

THE WARNING.

Around the firesides of the West lingers this tale of a hero brave,
Who breathed his last in storied past, while striving human life to save.
During the fall of '55 on a dark and stormy night,
Adown the swift Columbia, like an eagle in its flight,
Darted the light canoe of friendly Indian Jack
To warn the people at The Dalles of a dreaded night attack.
The startled villagers for self-defense prepared,
Then called for a volunteer, for one who freely dared
To carry the news to Stevens about the war at hand,
Through five hundred lonely miles, where skulked the savage band.
Then rose that gallant yeoman, Hank Pearson, bold and strong,
And started on that mountain ride so dangerous and long.
Not his the classic face, not his the rhythmic name
That sculptor on marble loves to trace, or minstrel softly gives to fame.
But fitter for him by far, is granite's rude, enduring heart,
And sweeter rings his name afar, when comrade sings his noble part.

THE RIDE.

Fast he rode by Columbia's stream,
Guided by day-star or moon's pale beam:
By day and night he hastened on,
Passing Celilo, whence had gone
All the braves of the fishing village,
The last to leave for war's rude pillage.
As he neared Walla Walla's lovely vale,
He spied a ploughman in the dale;
Telling his tale so fierce and new,
He asked for a horse to carry him through.
"Take 'Antelope,' a steed more true
Ne'er from the meadow dashed the dew."
Springing upon the gallant black,
He breathed his name, the rein held slack;
Forward flew the quivering steed,
Straining his limbs to their utmost speed.
Not faster the startled deer is borne
When soundeth anear the huntsman's horn:
Not surer flies the unerring dart
Seeking its rest in that trembling heart.
Leaving behind Walla Walla's plain,
He dashed on through the Coeur d'Alene.

THE ARRIVAL AND THE PASSING.

So without pause by night or day,
He rode until one morning gray,
Spattered with variation of every ground,
That 'twixt The Dalles and Benton is found.
He was lifted tenderly from the back
Of the gallant but all breathless black;
And was carried in through the open door
Straight to the side of our war governor,
Then striving to rise, bold Pearson spoke—
Though his words by frequent gasps were broke—
"Kamia kin and fierce Kanasket
Have raised on high the bloody hatchet;
For their leader's return, your people pray,
Make haste, brave Stevens, haste away!"
In the arms of friends, his last words said,
The messenger falls with a drooping head;
His eyelids close, his deed are o'er,
The courier will ride on steeds no more.
Softly our Roman his orders told:
"Keep tender vigils o'er hero bold;
My people are calling, I hasten on.
I'd pause not now for my own dear son."
Stevens sped on to reach Hell Gate,
Where Spotted Eagle impatient did wait
To safely guide the Governor,
O'er mountain path to seat of war;
Where he led his men in gallant fight,
Till peace soon followed the war's dark night.

A CLOSING STRAIN.

Still by the hearth-stones of the West
Lingers this tale of a hero brave,
Who breathed his last in a storied past,
While striving human life to save,
Still whisper gray sires 'round hearths at home,
That sometimes in the weird moonlight,
A phantom rider on horse afire,
Comes and vanishes in the night;
A sign that once more in time of need,
He will ride, as of yore, his gallant steed.

The tale is told, the hearth is cold,
But the heart throbs warm for the hero bold;
And ever may his memory last
While hearts are thrilled by tales of the past.
"For whether on the scaffold high,
Or in the battle's van,
The fittest place for man to die,
Is where he dies for man."

FOOTNOTES.

"My people are calling, I hasten on,
I'd pause not now for my own dear son."
"Stevens sped on to reach Hell Gate,
Where Spotted Eagle impatient did wait."

In describing the death of General Stevens, the New York Tribune of September 5, 1862, says: "A moment after Stevens seized the colors, his son Hazzard fell wounded, and cried to his father that he was hurt. With a glance backward, that Roman father said, 'I can't attend you now, Hazzard; Corporal Thompson, see to my boy.'"

That was his last farewell; a few moments afterward he lay cold and still on the field of Chantilly, his fingers still clasping, like bands of steel, the flag he loved so well.

The Nez Perce chiefs, Spotted Eagle and Three Feathers, with seventy followers, acted as bodyguard for Governor Stevens on his perilous return.

Spotted Eagle and his band proved faithful to the whites throughout the war, and fought gallantly with them in several engagements.

THE CASTLE ON THE PLAINS.

It is hard to believe that, but a generation ago, Clarke County was on the very verge of the Northwest frontier, and as an outpost of American civilization was continually beset by all the dangers and trials of a border community. In these quiet, "piping days of peace," we hear little of those troublous times, when the hurrying messenger would draw rein before the cabin of some lone frontiersman to tell him of the latest Indian massacre, and then dash on to warn other remote settlements. At such a time there was surely as much need of haste as when the messenger of Rhoderick Dhue was dispatched to carry the signal for the gathering of the clan. Whether the courier was a white settler riding a hardy cayuse pony or a friendly Indian runner, his feet clad in moccasins ornamented with beads glistening like dew in the morning sun, the words of Walter Scott come unbidden to the lips:

"Speed, Malise, speed; the dun deer's hide
On fleeter foot was never tied!"

As the Scottish clansmen quickly gathered at Clancrick Mead, so did the frontiersmen of this county hastily meet at some central locality to prepare for the defense of their families. In time of great stress, the home-builders quickly became home-defenders. While we read thrilling tales of border warfare in Scotland, we are scarcely aware of the stirring scenes which have been enacted in our own neighborhood. It was quite by an accident that the writer first heard of the old fort at Fourth Plain.

When the news of the Indian depredations reached the settlers of Fourth Plain, early in 1856, they determined not to flee to town for protection, but to erect a stockade near their own homes. Trees were felled and the logs were hauled to a small hill on the place of Mr. Geer, where it had been decided the castle should be built. The fort consisted of a stockade about sixteen feet high, enclosing about half an acre of ground, and was surrounded by a small trench. Within the enclosure and against the walls of the fort, a dozen or more log cabins were built, leaving quite an open space in the center. This open court served as a drilling place for the embattled farmers, as well as a playground for the children.

To this castle the freeholders of the Plain came with their families when they heard of the attack of the Indians upon the Cascade blockhouse, in March, 1856, and within these friendly battlements they remained until July. Their commander was Captain Richard Covington, who drew quite a good picture of Fort Vancouver in 1855.

Tradition has it that Mr. Covington possessed the first organ ever brought into Clarke County, and was wont to entertain his guests by playing upon the violin, while his wife accompanied him on the organ. It is said that one of their most frequent visitors in 1853 was Lieut. U. S. Grant, who thought naught of the six-mile ride on the lonely trail that led from Vancouver to the Plain.

Among the settlers who brought their families to the fort for protection were Walter Maybray, John and Charles Bird, Valentine, John and Jacob Proebstel, Richard McCary, John Bersch and Thomas Norton. Sentries kept watch by night, and sometimes scouting parties were sent out to keep the Indians at a distance. In the morning the settlers went forth to work, carrying their rifles upon their shoulders. Though no attack was made upon them, the yeomanry of the Plain showed that they possessed the courage to defend their homes and were equal to any emergency.

Instead of being the scene of bloodshed and death, the fort was a place of life and birth, for there Henry Bersch was born, June 11, 1856.

After the people had returned to their homes, a term of school was taught at the fort, and it was also used as a place for religious services. Thus, within those walls which it was feared would resound with the war-whoop of the redmen, the yeomen and their families united in singing the sweet songs of Zion; while from those battlements, erected as a defense against a savage foe arose the supplications of His people to the great Jehovah, imploring divine protection against their most insidious foe, the common enemy of man.

The fort and buildings are now completely obliterated and have become only a dim tradition of the past. The land once occupied by this grim monument of war is now covered with flourishing fruit trees. This is another virtual fulfillment of that beautiful prophecy: "Their spears shall be fashioned into ploughshares and their swords into pruning hooks."

BALLAD OF THE BATTLE-GROUND.

THEME.

At the beginning of the Indian war of 1855, the Klickitat Indians were conveyed from their homes on the Cathlapoochee or Lewis River to the old fort at Vancouver. This was done to prevent them from being led into war by the emissaries of Kansaket, the hostile chief. As the regulars had been sent east of the Cascade mountains, the fort was garrisoned by company "A," Vancouver volunteers, commanded by Captain Strong.

These were joined by a company of Oregon trappers under Captain Newell. But the greater part of these two companies were afterward sent away, leaving only about thirty men.

As everything seemed peaceful here, these were also preparing to embark on the steamer *Belle* for the seat of war, when it was discovered that the friendly Klickitats had "folded their tents like the Arabs and as silently stole away." They were soon overtaken and promised to return if given time to mourn for their chief, Umtux, who had just died and whom they wished to bury in secret.

The whites trusted them and came back alone. For this they were severely criticised on their return, some of the impulsive women presenting them with a bundle of feminine apparel as a proper costume. The women were deeply in earnest; with them it was too serious a matter for an idle jest.

But as the Indians kept their pledge and returned, all unpleasant words now "lie in the deep bosom of the ocean buried," while only loving memories remain. The snows of forty years have covered with a mantle of love all the errors of that sacred past, and the alchemy of time has changed anger's base alloy into purest gold. So the tradition which has come down to us as a relic of by-gone days should be preserved with all its strength and beauty unimpaired. And though these verses are weak and poor, yet the story may be of interest to some.

This tale was first told me by an old settler as we sat around the fire one winter's evening. He has since passed away; "for him no more the blazing hearth shall burn," but to hear it as he told it—his graphic words, his dramatic gestures, his flashing eye and his hearty laugh at the close—ah, that was poetry!

YE BAI LAD OF OLD VANCOUVER TOWN

THE FLIGHT AND PURSUIT.

List to this dim tradition old,
As told me by a pioneer bold;
'Twas in November of 55,
The Khicknah Indians, like a hive
Of bees, were gathered at the fort
Near old Vancouver village
To keep them safe from war and pillage.
All went well till late one night,
'Twas found the Indians had taken flight;
"Would they join Kapasket's savage
And aid in war's rapine and ravage?"
Quickly did Strong and Newell then
Pursue with thirty mounted men.
The trusty scouts the toe soon found
At a place since called the Battle Ground.

THE COUNCIL FIRE.

The time of day was sotkum sun,
For half the Feaventy course was run;
And council fire was promptly planned.
Chief Untux, of the savage band,
Brave Newell and his and DuPucee,
True types of mountain trappers free;
With Strong, and Sergeant Hathaway,
From company of company "A,"
Spreading blankets on the ground.
They formed a group the blaze around.
Newell then asked the chieftain bold
To come in quiet to the fold.
Untux said some treacherous knaves
Had spread false tales among his braves;
But now, all thoughts of warfare o'er,
They would return to Columbia's shore.
He seized a coal of dying light
To place in Friendship's pipe so bright.
As each one blew a breath of love,
'Twas wafted by angel wings above;
And as the incense rose in air,
All hate and anger vanished there.
The meeting o'er, with smiling face
Each one resumed his former place.

THE DISCOVERY AND THE RETURN

Two scouts were started back to tell
The anxious town-folk all was well;
But 's quickly on they push,
Beside a withered hazel bush,
Lying lifeless on the plain.
They find Chief Untux arrow slain.
Back to camp they haste with fright,
And tell brave Strong the dreadful sight.
"Who volunteers the tribe to tell?"
Forward sprang bold Isage LaBelle,
Bared his breast to savage foe,
And briefly told his tale of woe.
Though wails and threats were mingled loud,
The trapper soothed the tearful crowd;
At his kind words they wiped their tears,
So touched by sun, snow disappears.

The trapper his savage friends embraced,
Then back to camp his steps retraced.
Only a short time had gone by,
When Indian messenger came nigh;
At him a paleface aimed his brand,
A comrade knocked it from his hand.
The brave was trusty Indian Jack,
He said the redmen would go back,
If given one day to show their grief
For brave Umtux, their fallen chief.
"Twas given; the men with hostages left,
While the Klickitats mourned, of chief bereft.
As they buried their gallant warrior,
"And no man knoweth his sepulcher."

THE KLICKITATS' LAMENT.

"Gone is Umtux, gone forever!
No more down the Western river,
Where he oft the wild deer slew,
Shall he dash in light canoe;
He now rides his fleet cayuse
On hunting grounds of Memeloose."
For happy Isle of Memeloose."
You have crossed the darkened river,
No more to fight in battle for us,
Nor sound with us dread war-whoop chorus;
Thou leavest squaw and dear papoose,
On hunting grounds of Memeloose."
First rose the requiem loud and shrill,
Chanted on vale and lonely hill;
Its closing cadence of deep woe
Sank to a murmur soft and low,
The music borne by passing gale,
Sounds faint and sweet adown the dale.

THE MATRONS' GIFT.

Knowing full well the tribe would follow,
The men marched back o'er hill and hollow.
Fast flew the news about the town
Of what was called the squaws' back-down.
"What! let free those wild redmen?"
Short time for explanation then
Was allowed by angry dames of village,
They thought of homes exposed to pillage:
And gath'ring apron, hood and shawl,
Game them as reward to their warriors all,
Saying, "This as a medal of bravery take
For leaving precious lives at stake."
Answered then good Captain Strong,
With explanation full and long;
E'en as he spoke a scout arrived—
"The tribe have started back," he cried.
Blushed for shame the women then;
"Forgive our hasty words, brave men,
Those words from foolish anger came."
"We gladly forgive thee, worthy dame,
But still these trophies do we claim;
To us they will be as the pillar of flame,
Which Israel followed o'er the plain.
When tomorrow we speed on Columbia's main,
Beyond Multnomah's silv'ry fountain,
Toward lovely Hood, our sentinel mountain,
To the Cascades' roaring torrent,

Where foams with rage the rushing current,
On the mast of the Belle, our gallant boat,
This apron shall securely float,
While above will wave this bonnet free,
Speaking of home and victory.
This shawl, our Spartan matrons' shield,
To savage foe we'll never yield;
But bring it back with us in glory,
Or ne'er return to tell the story.
'Twill be our boast in all sorts of weather,
That we show a white hood, not a white feather!"
Thus did the aged pioneer hold
Tell me this tender tradition of old.

AN AFTER-THOUGHT.

Ever, women of Vancouver, be
Impulsive, generous and nobly free,
As were your ancestors of yore,
Who settled on storied Columbia's shore;
And may all men of ye olden town
Ever tremble at a woman's frown:
Ever your colors bravely wear,
O, ye maidens, so bright and fair!

Memaloose signifies death or the abode of the dead.
Memaloose Island, in the Columbia River, was a famous Indian burial ground.

Isaac LaBelle was a bold trapper who possessed the confidence and friendship of the Indians.

Trusty Indian Jack was a friendly Indian who risked his life on several occasions during this war to warn his white friends of impending massacre.

A WESTERN CROMWELL.

All students of history have read of that dramatic scene when Oliver Cromwell, England's great protector, at the head of his invincible "Iron-sides" marched down the great hall where the "long parliament" was in session and dismissed that dignified assemblage. An event somewhat similar to this was enacted amid the primeval forests of the Territory of Washington more than forty years ago.

In 1856 the pioneers of Washington were engaged in a bloody border warfare against the savage tribes. Governor Stevens had appointed Col. B. F. Shaw, a gallant frontiersman and Indian fighter, to the command of the volunteer militia. Several French-Canadian fur-trappers, who were charged with having given "aid and comfort to the enemy," had been captured and placed under a military guard at Fort Steilacoom. In order to keep these prisoners from the civil authorities, Governor Stevens proclaimed martial law over Pierce and Thurston Counties.

At this time Edward Lander was chief justice of the territory, having been appointed by President Zachary Taylor. Judge Lander was an upright, dignified whig of the "old school." The declaration of martial law had aroused the indignation of the worthy jurist, and he proceeded to open the spring session of the district court of Pierce County at Fort Steilacoom, with the intention of inflicting just punishment upon those who had shown contempt for the majesty of the law as represented in his own august personage. It was also suspected that a writ of habeas corpus would be issued, ordering the military authorities to give up the prisoners for trial by the civil courts. This act Governor Stevens was determined to prevent. When the day dawned upon which the court was to convene the excitement was intense. News of the impending trouble had spread abroad, and many settlers from the surrounding country had driven to the "settlement" to witness the exciting event.

It was a pleasant May morning and the people gathered in groups within the little clearing around the courthouse, discussing the important questions of the day, including the general conduct of the war. It is hardly necessary to remark that in conformity with their privileges as American citizens, these stay-at-homers bitterly denounced the judge, the governor, the militia officers and

all others in authority. With slow, dignified steps the gallant judge walked by the noisy groups and entered the courtroom. He was followed by the bailiff and, at a more respectful distance, by the entire crowd.

After seating himself and carefully adjusting his powdered wig, the chief justice commanded the bailiff to call the court to order. That gallant custodian of the law, mindful of his great importance, arose and in his loudest tones shouted: "Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye!" At this point he was interrupted by the noisy tramp, tramp, tramp of a band of men marching up the steps. The cry of "soldiers, soldiers" was heard in many parts of the room. "Order in the court!" sternly shouted the judge. "Mr. Bailiff, proceed." Thus admonished, that worthy continued: "The district court of the fourth judicial district of the Territory of Washington is now—" "Forward, march!" Bang! The door flew open with a slam, and into the room rushed Colonel Shaw at the head of his company of brave Washington volunteers. In spite of their vigorous protests, the judge and his bailiff were promptly seized and placed under arrest; the room was quickly cleared and the door locked.

It may be safely assumed that when the free American citizens, who had been thus summarily ejected from a public building, again assembled on the outside, their arguments were somewhat more heated than formerly. The discussion was taken up by the politicians of that time and became the burning issue of an exciting political contest. Those who sided with Chief Justice Lander were called "confederates of the savages," while Governor Stevens and Colonel Shaw were denounced as "tyrants" and "military despots."

As the campaign progressed, old party ties were rent asunder, and the war governor received the loyal support of the volunteers and the "war whigs." His vigorous war policy met with the approval of the people.

At the conclusion of the political contest all patriotic citizens joined hands in a united effort to restore peace to the distracted territory. It is but fair to state that Judge Lander himself shouldered a musket and proved himself a brave soldier as well as an honest judge.

This is a brief description of the manner in which Governor Stevens thwarted what he considered an un-called-for attempt to interfere with his military operations at a critical period. After an examination by a military commission the prisoners were released.

Of the prominent actors in this stirring scene Col. B. F. Shaw, the present state senator from Clarke County, now alone survives. With his strong, giant-like form and vigorous intellect, he seems a fitting embodiment of the "heroic age" of Washington's history. He is a true type of the sturdy pioneer yeomanry that fought so bravely upon Connell's Prairie and Spokane's Plain.

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